

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Σ₁ [0001] This application is the National Stage of International Application No. PCT/GB98/00863, filed on March 20, 1998 and published under PCT Article 21(2) in English, and claims priority of United Kingdom Applications No. 9705928.1 filed on March 21, 1997 and No. 9723338.1 filed on November 4, 1997.

Additionally, a marked up version of all the changes to the Substitute Specification and a clean version of the Substitute Specification is enclosed.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follow:

1. (Amended) An expandable tubing assembly comprising:

a tubular connector defining overlapping longitudinal slots and comprising an intermediate portion located between slotted end portions, the connector being radially expandable by deformation of fingers of material in the intermediate portion where adjacent circumferentially spaced slots overlap, and

Σ₂ lengths of expandable tubing defining overlapping longitudinal slots with nodes beyond the ends of the tubing slots and having slotted end portions, the tubing being radially expandable by deformation of fingers of material where adjacent circumferentially spaced slots overlap,

wherein the slotted end portions of the connector are threaded to the nodes of respective end portions of the tubing lengths and the deformable fingers of the connector are axially spaced from the deformable fingers proximate the slotted end portions of the respective tubing lengths.

3. The assembly of claim 1 wherein the intermediate portion is of corresponding configuration of the tubing lengths, such that expansion characteristics of the connected tubing assembly are substantially constant.

4. The assembly of claim 3, wherein the connector intermediate portion is of substantially the same wall thickness of the tubing and wherein the connector end portions are upset.

5. The assembly of claim 4 wherein each connector end portion defines an internal thread for engaging a corresponding thread on an outer surface of the respective tubing end portion.

6. The assembly of claim 1 wherein the connector end portions define grooves to receive corresponding tongues provided on the tubing length end portions.

16. (Twice Amended) An expandable tubing assembly, comprising:
a first and second tubular members having a plurality of longitudinal slots formed therein;
a connector threadably disposed between the first and second tubular members, wherein the connector comprises:
first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots formed therein; and
an intermediate portion located between the first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots that at least partially overlap the slots formed in the first and second ends.

17. (Amended) The assembly of claim 16, wherein the slots formed in the first tubular member, the second tubular member, and the intermediate portion are expandable.

18. (Amended) The assembly of claim 17, wherein the slots formed in the first tubular member, the second tubular member, and the intermediate portion are expandable to form substantially diamond shaped apertures.

19. The assembly of claim 17, wherein an inner surface of the first and second ends of the connector is threaded.

20. (Amended) The assembly of claim 19, wherein the threaded inner surface of the first and second ends of the connector engage a corresponding thread on an outer surface of the first and second tubular members.

21. (Amended) The assembly of claim 20, wherein the first and second ends of the connector include a recessed groove that receives a tongue disposed on an end of the first and second tubular members.

22. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 16, wherein the connector is attached to the first and second tubulars using one or more means for connecting disposed between the circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots formed in the first and second ends of the connector.

23. (Twice Amended) An expandable tubing assembly, comprising:
a first and second tubular members having a plurality of longitudinal slots formed therein;

a connector disposed between the first and second slotted tubular members, wherein the connector comprises:

first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots formed therein, wherein an inner surface of the first and second ends of the connector is threaded; and

an intermediate portion located between the first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots that at least partially overlap the slots formed in the first and second ends,

wherein the threaded inner surfaces of the first and second ends of the connector engage a corresponding thread on an outer surface of the first and second tubular members.

24. (Amended) The assembly of claim 23, wherein the slots formed in the first tubular member, the second tubular member, and the intermediate portion are expandable to form substantially diamond shaped apertures.

25. (Amended) An expandable tubing assembly, comprising:

a first and second tubular members having a plurality of longitudinal slots formed therein;

a connector disposed between the first and second slotted tubular members, wherein the connector comprises:

first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots formed therein, wherein an inner surface of the first and second ends of the connector is threaded and wherein the first and second ends of the connector include a recessed groove; and

an intermediate portion located between the first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots that at least partially overlap the slots formed in the first and second ends,

wherein the threaded inner surfaces of the first and second ends of the connector engage a corresponding thread on an outer surface of the first and second tubular and each recessed groove receives a corresponding tongue disposed on an end of the first and second tubular members. 4

26. (Amended) A method for coupling an expandable tubing assembly, comprising: providing a sleeve comprising:

first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots formed therein, wherein an inner surface of the first and second ends of the connector is threaded and wherein the first and second ends of the connector include a recessed groove; and

an intermediate portion located between the first and second ends having a plurality of circumferentially spaced, longitudinal slots that at least partially overlap the slots formed in the first and second ends,